

Workplace Learning Center

Antigo Main Street recently partnered with Northcentral Technical College (NTC) to develop a Workplace Learning Center to meet the training needs of downtown Antigo businesses. The mission statement "Business success through education-Antigo Main Street and NTC, partners in building a well-trained workforce" defines the goal of the Learning Center. The Learning Center provides employers and employees an opportunity to refresh math and writing skills, learn PC basics, improve supervisory practices, keep abreast of hiring regulations and plan academic and career goals. NTC instructors provide no or low-cost training at the Antigo Main Street office. Learning center funding includes a \$7500 grant from the State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and a matching \$3750 grant from Antigo Main Street.

A steering committee made up of business people from the Main Street district helped plan the topics for 1999-2000. "Are You Ready for Summer Visitors?" kicked off the Learning Center's programs in May 1999 with nearly 30 people attending a customer service seminar. Computer classes, which began in September and will run through early December, are covering the basics of Windows 95, Introduction to Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Other



training will include a video/discussion series on coaching in the workplace during the noon hour, as well as customer service, and telephone techniques. By the end of 1999 nearly 100 people had improved their skills through the Learning Center. In January 2000, Main Street Board members shared their expertise in discussion sessions entitled, Ask the Attorney, Ask the Accountant, and Ask the Insurance Agent.

Lifetime learning is essential in today's competitive marketplace. The Learning Center initiative benefits all parties involved. Businesses receive valuable training; Antigo Main Street has a program that offers tangible evidence of how it is serving business; and Northcentral Technical College opens another venue for providing further education for adults.

For more information, call the Wisconsin Main Street Program at (608) 266-7531.

